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principles, but eschewed the details. Upon a limited canvas we have striven to draw the main outlines in such a way as both to maintain the proportions of the culture and to interest the general reader as well as the student. Much is left unsaid about such aspects of the culture as the manner in which men try to harness the powers of nature and to condition the individual to his social function, the basic assumptions of the magico-religious world and the elements imparted to the culture by contact with other peoples, both African and European. We have not touched upon many aspects usually dealt with in the larger anthropological monographs. In view of our general object, we have omitted not only whole subjects of interest to the anthropologist, such as birth and death ceremonial, arts and crafts, village organization and kinship terminology, but also details on practices of importance to specialists, such as care of cattle, cultivation, diet and diseases, land tenure and medicine. While we believe that the many omissions do not detract from the essential balance and unity of the whole, it is our intention to fill in the gaps with articles on specialized aspects of the culture, and with additional books on larger topics such as law and judicial arrangements, marriage and social organization, magic, and religion. Too much must not be expected in the present volume.

Our contacts with the Lovedu began more than ten years ago with short visits of a month each in 1928, 1930, and 1932. These visits served as an introduction, but sustained field investigation was rendered possible only when, between 1936 and 1938, we held a Fellowship of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. During this period we were in the field sixteen and a half months in all: April to July, 1936, November, 1936, to July, 1937, September and October, 1937, and May to August, 1938. In some of the intervening periods, while one of us was ill, the other as far as possible maintained personal touch with the Lovedu and, in order to verify some of our observations and to investigate a ceremony not held since 1905, we also paid some visits of a few days each in 1939.

Except to mention two points, we shall refrain from expounding our methods of investigation. The principles we adopted were, on the one hand, personal and intensive local observation, and, on the other, comparative investigation over a large area. Personal observation is essential because, though verbal accounts given by reliable informants may serve as useful starting-points, they generally not only are unconsciously idealized, but assume a background unknown to the investigator and often entirely escaping his attention. Accounts may reflect theory and ideals, but often give a very wrong impression of practice and real life; they never convey atmosphere and personal relationships. By comparative study, we obtained a mass of valuable clues as to lines of inquiry or interpretation which we could follow up and check by further local and intensive as well as extensive observation.

Personal observation is tiring, slow to yield results, and usually objectionable to the Lovedu; but in the end the rewards are great. After a long day's work, it is distasteful, but often essential, to keep awake all night sitting in the stifling atmosphere of a hut crowded with dancing,

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123 sweating humanity. After an exhausting walk of ten miles or more over difficult country, in order to witness a ceremony, it is discouraging to be refused admittance to the performance or to find it postponed until the European leaves; but occasional success amply repays perseverance. In the timeless Lovedu society, even if the investigator is welcomed, he may have to wait hours for a performance to begin; but the time need never be wholly wasted. Personal observation brings to light bewildering variations in the culture. There is no such thing as rigid conformity, and rules are made for man, not man for rules. Until the observer's own cultural conditioning is re-conditioned by intimate touch with the society, he cannot hope to penetrate its meaning.

In this book we are concerned to describe custom and life as they are to-day, after fifty years of European contact. Every custom, every ceremony, every case in it, has been personally seen except in those instances, always clear from the context, in which the event, such as the death of a Lovedu chief, did not occur during the period of investigation. We have written about everyday things as they are enacted in the tribe to-day, not as they were in the past. For obvious reasons, names mentioned in illustrative cases are all fictitious, save only where they are essential for the subject matter, as in the chapters on tribal history, social groupings, and political organization.

At the outset of our investigation we planned a rough division of work. One of us, E. J. Krige, concentrated upon magic and religion, family life, and women's activities; the other, J. D. Krige, upon laws and political organization, history, and man's activities. But our method of studying human situations as and where we found them, and of recording things as and when they occurred, precluded any rigid division, and each obtained information upon all aspects of culture. Each of us independently studied many institutions, such as marriage, economic life, and medical practices, and the diversity of our information and impressions—often reflections of our personal differences of outlook—provided useful clues to further observation and interpretation, besides showing that in field work the temperament of the investigator is a vital factor. In the preparation of this book E. J. Krige is responsible for Chapters II, V, VII, VIII, XII to XV, and J. D. Krige for Chapters I, III, IV, VI, IX to XI, XVI, XVII and the maps; but each has carefully gone through the work of the other and the whole is the result of the fullest co-operation between us. It does not seem necessary to mention in detail which of us took the photographs reproduced.

197 As regards the language of the Lovedu, we found that, difficult as it was to acquire, a working knowledge was absolutely essential, because implicit in it is a vast background of associations which can never be recaptured in translation. Khilovedu is now practically a dialect of Sotho, yet it cannot be adequately written in Sotho orthography. It approximates to Venda in much of its vocabulary, falls midway between Sotho and Venda in grammatical structure, and is Sothoized in phonology, 104 but many of its sounds are unknown in Sotho. Generally speaking, 194 we have adopted the orthography recommended by the International Institute with some modifications. For dental *d* and *t* we have used *ḍ* and *ṭ*

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602 were to go to court for a return of the cattle her brother used or if a brother were to accuse his cattle-linked sister of witchcraft, they could no longer be on friendly terms; it would then be said, *'vuhaka vu file'*, their relationship is dead. But since life in Lovedu society can hardly be lived without the social usages and mutual obligations associated with kin, a man will always find some one among his large number of sisters to take her place. The manner in which close alliances with relatives is built up is shown in the case of Eliah and Thagu. Eliah has moved into an area ten miles from his nearest relations. Thagu, who lives in a large kraal near him, has a sister who married a far-off father's brother of Eliah. Eliah, therefore, stands in the relationship of a remote *tsezi*—that is, son-in-law—to Thagu, for, since Thagu's daughters should marry sons of their father's sister (i.e. sons of Eliah's father's brother and therefore his brothers), these daughters regard the whole of that family and therefore Eliah and his sons too as possible husbands. Therefore, when the last child of Eliah was born, Thagu sent beer 'to see the child', as Eliah's wife's parents would do, even though they had never known each other before. Because they live close together and get on fairly well, steps have been taken to tighten the kinship bond between them. Mabulani is another example. Mabulani's fellow wife is the one married with her husband's sister's (Munyamani's) cattle, and her daughter should therefore marry Munyamani's son. But the fellow wife is old and all her children already married. Now Mabulani, in spite of the fact that she is disliked by Munyamani for having been instrumental in alienating her fellow wife from her husband's affections, is assiduously trying to build up good relations with Munyamani's household. She sends beer and pays visits because, as it is believed, she has two daughters, one of whom she would like to be married there.

A factor that completely nullifies traditional patterns of behaviour between relatives is that of age. Obviously the respect due to a father's sister, with all the prestige of a generation older than oneself, must fall to the ground in a case where the father's sister is younger than oneself. In this manner, polygyny plays the strangest tricks with kinship relationships. Since the youngest wife of a man may be considerably junior to his eldest children, some mother's brothers and father's sisters may be very much younger than oneself. Bilowi, aged about twenty-three, and Badama, aged five, live in one village. When Badama cries or fights with Bilowi's youngest brother, she pacifies and mothers them both. Yet Bilowi is Badama's 'child', since Bilowi's father's mother and Badama's mother are fellow wives.

602 Kinship is the greatest bond between people; beside it, taken all in all,
● 123 any other single tie fades into insignificance. Even a fictitious bond of kinship established between ourselves and the head of an area in which we stayed served as a basis for the removal of suspicion and the building up of a better understanding between ourselves and the people with whom we came into contact. We were never admitted to the ceremonies connected with birth and early babyhood till our 'sister's' child had a baby. Then as a grandmother with a natural interest, which all could understand, in the welfare of our grandchild, we were permitted to be

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present. Here was a legitimate human interest—not merely the idle curiosity of a European or the recording of customs that might end in police intervention.

The kin share your joys and sorrows, give support in your hour of need and advice in the affairs of life. When you are in trouble and have to pay a fine which you do not possess, it is your brothers who will come to your aid. On the marriage of your children, your brothers are called to hear the matter and to give their advice; when there is death your kin rally to your side. A widow is never faced with destitution; her husband's brother will care for her, and to-day, when, as among Christians, this sometimes entails help in training the children for a career, it is often a heavy liability. In working parties or when meal has to be stamped for beer-making, it is the relatives living near who are most relied upon for their help. A woman whose husband is in town depends on her male kin to help her in the yearly renewal of storage receptacles, hut-building and ploughing. She will, where possible, reward them with beer, but this is by no means always done. People like living near their kin. An elder and a younger brother, one living near Tzaneen, the other in Duloved u, both died. Then the grown-up son of the younger brother called the wife and family of the elder brother to come and build near them, saying that the children of his *ramuhulu* would not know him if they lived so far away. Kinship, as we point out elsewhere, knits together the political system. But it is worth repeating that the kin are the core of the district and the bonds between districts; that, in general, the father's relatives live largely in the same district, the mother's or the wife's in some other area and visits and gifts of beer serve as an introduction to the districts in which they live; and that all the heads of districts, by virtue of having to send a daughter to 'marry' the queen, are linked to the capital by a kinship bond.

One would expect that, in a society like that of the Lovedu, with a strong sense of kinship obligations, the position of orphans would not be very different from that of other children. Yet the Lovedu feel the position of an orphan, any one wholly dependent on relatives for food and shelter, to be a peculiarly sad one. Hence the riddle, 'Little fountain full of muck', and its answer, 'The heart of an orphan'; hence also the proverb, 'It takes a woman with a generous heart to keep an orphan well'. The smoky side of a fire is called 'the side where orphans sit', and if you sit chin in hand, people always say, 'Why are you so sad? Are you an orphan?' Even old women, those skilled and inveterate beggars, think that a sure way of enlisting your sympathy is to plead that they are orphans with no one to give them things.

It is said that orphans have to do harder work than other children and have many a time to hear complaints that they eat too much. When the children of the house receive clothes as presents from relatives, the orphan gets little or nothing; and nowadays, while the children of the house may be sent to school, the orphan remains at home herding. None of our own personal contacts with orphans bore out these tales, and when we cited them as examples contradicting their statements, informants admitted that those cases did not bear out the general principle. Indeed, what impressed us most were the conscious efforts made,